



NORTHAMPTON ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

APPROVED MINUTES

May 09, 2019

City Council Chambers

212 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Attendees: Bill Dwight, Richard Parasiliti, Ben Weil, Wayne Feiden, Adin Maynard, David Pomerantz

Facilitator: Chris Mason, Energy and Sustainability Officer

Scribe: Douglas Renick

Public Comment Period:

Adele Franks: I attended the Board of Building Regulation and Standards hearing in Boston which was about the Net-Zero Stretch Code. About 50 people were present to speak. Public comments were taken at the end of the meeting not the beginning. Sen. Jo Comerford spoke about her bill requiring the development of a stretch code. The BBRS was not welcoming. They said that no municipalities had come to them about a stretch code. The building code doesn't limit any one going for net zero. Amendments were presented for IECC. The BBRS was rude to most people. They cut public comments short. Many cities/municipalities presented. A member of the board suggested that they form a subcommittee to examine this. The response was "no." They said the BBRS needs more staff unless they can tap others to do it. BBRS will not create a net-zero stretch code. They will have to be pressured to do so. Northampton can provide some pressure. Commissioners thanked Adele for the report. IECC code for 2019 has been adopted. It is not the stretch code. Time frame for a change is not clear. The MA Municipal Association might be a source of pressure.

Lilly Lombard: Thanks to Adele. In reference to large scale solar arrays, the Public Shade Tree Committee worked with Carolyn Misch. I've worked on this with many people. I support the draft regulations in front of you and I will answer questions.

Review/Approve Minutes of 4/11/19 Meeting: A motion to approve was made by Bill Dwight. Ben Weil seconded. Unanimous approval.

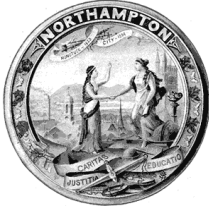
Climate Resiliency and Regeneration Plan:

Wayne Feiden: The draft Plan went out yesterday. The Commission's feedback is welcomed. I will put all comments together and send them to the consultants. The Plan will incorporate comments and then there will be a public forum on the final version of the Plan. If the city is to be carbon neutral by 2050, what's the plan? Chris shared his comments on the draft plan:

- Good strong vision statements throughout
- Weak, non-specific energy strategies in the Executive Summary with no goals and it is unclear whether increasing the energy efficiency of existing building stock is included. Noted that, The pathways for action section seems to indicate that there is a lot more to the energy strategies than

Voting Members: Mary Biddle • William Dwight • Wayne Feiden • Louis Hasbrouck • Alisa Klein • Adin Maynard • Ashley Muspratt • Richard Parasiliti • David Pomerantz • Tim Smith • Ben Weil

Ex-officio, non voting: Chris Mason



NORTHAMPTON ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

APPROVED MINUTES

May 09, 2019

City Council Chambers

212 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

is listed in the Executive Summary and wondered if perhaps there will be more specificity, objectives and goals in later sections.

- Large institutions and commercial entities need to be included in stakeholder input.
- Surprised that 1% of emissions are from solid waste disposal that seems too small. Wayne justified the 1% figure.
- It seems that energy efficiency improvements in existing buildings is not one of the categories in the pathway to zero analysis.
- Couldn't find improving efficiency of existing building stock there either. Both should be.
- Heat pumps: city has more examples of using heat pumps that could be added.

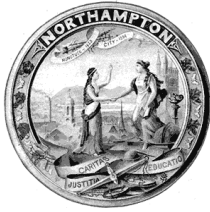
Final comments should be sent to Wayne by tomorrow, May 10.

Net-Zero Stretch Energy Code: Chris has a letter from the mayor to BBRs strongly supporting a net-zero energy code. It will be sent out tomorrow. Sen. Comerford and Rep. Sabadosa support the stretch code bill. The City Council will draft a supportive letter to BBRs.

Ordinance Relative to Large-Scale Ground Mounted Solar Arrays:

Bill Dwight and Alisa Klein were looking for input at the last NESC meeting. Chris has done some research. The NESC does not have a lot to add. Information for the Council will help. Carolyn Misch spoke briefly on changes in the ordinance and why they were made. Changes were related to closing a loophole and trying to allow some development in areas previously prohibited. Changes of concern from the Public Shade Tree Committee (PSTC): What threshold will trigger a review? The Planning Board and PSTC conferred. The threshold was lowered from a 5 acres to 3 acres trigger. The current version has a 2 acre threshold. If more than 2 acres then there is an analysis of economic and environmental impacts, a look at the forest canopy and the ecosystem in that area. An added element was using information from the Nature Conservancy, i.e., there are important corridors for climate emergencies. This will be used if an analysis is triggered. It's now in the solicitor's hands. One change in this version is that analysis is put back in the special permit with no site plan. Adin: why the change from 3 acres to 2 acres? What do developers think about this? There are now 2 projects with permits. The Planning Board approved clearing 2 acres and on one plot closer to 3 acres. We can justify 2 acres (25K board feet). I've talked to one solar developer about additional analysis. They could easily adjust. One aspect of the ordinance which may be difficult is keeping stumps in place (above 2 acres). Audubon had people study solar arrays. The most likely land used is previously cleared land--3300 acres have been cleared for solar. It's been ramped up. Municipalities are freaking out. They are not equipped to manage these large companies. There are dramatic impacts in WM. We are equipping other communities with the tools they need, for example, in Branford, which only has volunteers in its municipal government. We are dealing with a failure at the state level. Solar developer CTI Energy

Voting Members:	Mary Biddle • William Dwight • Wayne Feiden • Louis Hasbrouck • Alisa Klein • Adin Maynard • Ashley Muspratt • Richard Parasiliti • David Pomerantz • Tim Smith • Ben Weil
Ex-officio, non voting:	Chris Mason



NORTHAMPTON ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

APPROVED MINUTES

May 09, 2019

City Council Chambers

212 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Services supports not cutting down trees. Large companies are moving to more renewables in their portfolios. People need to assist companies in moving to more renewables. If analysis is triggered, then a carbon balance determination is required. Chris has done some research on this. In his one-off example, it would take 5 years for an array to offset what the forest would have done in taking carbon out of atmosphere. Does the new ordinance tend to lead to cutting down more mature forests? It's simple acreage versus board feet as the threshold. The significant tree ordinance applies on land under 2 acres. Why eliminate the board feet limit? We were trying to make it more understandable. Are we saying "not on our land" but expecting other communities to contribute to a grid filled with green energy? Ben: in the worst case scenario of combusted trees, the array offsets the loss of carbon capture by trees. We want to preserve ecological function. In the proposed ordinance we have a workable set of guidelines. Lilly: it is a compromise ordinance. Our ecological systems are collapsing. We are part of a continuous forest from New Jersey to Canada. We must preserve this.

Adjournment: Moved by Bill Dwight. Adin Maynard seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

.

Voting Members:	Mary Biddle • William Dwight • Wayne Feiden • Louis Hasbrouck • Alisa Klein • Adin Maynard • Ashley Muspratt • Richard Parasiliti • David Pomerantz • Tim Smith • Ben Weil
Ex-officio, non voting:	Chris Mason